

# LITERARY TABLET.

Vol. IV.]

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[No. 20.]

## SELECTIONS.

### *Of the Origin of Roman Literature; and of the earliest writers.*

Before the age of Alexander the Great, the Romans made but little progress in literature. Naturally rough and unpolished, addicted to war, and struggling in continual conflict, either with enemies abroad, or popular contention at home, their language remained long in a savage state.

Livius and Ennius, the one a tragic, the other an epic poet and satyrical, were the first who began to clear it from its rudeness; though they were far from polishing it to that degree of elegance which it afterwards attained.

The truth is, the taste of the Romans was, at that time, extremely coarse; relishing nothing but wild ribaldry and low wit. Their military songs upon the occasion of a triumph, were among their earliest specimens in poetry, and were a kind of lampoons, in an ironical and jocular style, throwing reproaches on the commanders; and they were danced and sung to by the soldiers in the procession. They somewhat resembled the Dithyrambicks at the Grecian Bacchanalia; which, though rude at first, afterwards gave rise to tragedy and comedy among that polished people.

So, among the Romans, the verses called Fescennine, or Saturnian, were no other than rude satyrical songs; which, from their being used at their festivals, or triumphs, came, at last to be admitted on their stage, accompanied with music and dances. These, with little variation, for the space of 120 years, served instead of dramatic pieces; till Livius Andronicus undertook to write tragedies and comedies on the more enlarged and correct model of the Greeks.

Somewhat later, (viz. in the year of Rome 550,) flourished Plautus, that indelicate, though witty, comic poet; to whom succeeded Paccuvius and Accius, tragedians; all of whom contributed more or less to the refinement of their native tongue.

Plautus was of Sarsina, a small town in Umbria. He was some years younger than Nævius or Ennius, and died the first year of the elder Cato's censorship. His language is certainly excellent, and in the purest style, while his jests are rude and indelicate: he has several coarse and obscene touches; and has much the same fault with Aristophanes. At the same time, the humor of many of his scenes is strikingly just and comic; and above any thing of the kind in the Roman writers.

This is the constant opinion, of Varro, Cicero, A. Gellius, Macrobius, and the most

eminent modern critics; such as Lipsius, the Scaligers, Muretus, Turnebus.

But Terence, the friend and companion of Scipio Africanus, forming himself upon the model of Menander, surpassed all his predecessors in purity and elegance, and carried the Roman language, as far as the stage is concerned, to the highest pitch of perfection; while the justness and delicacy of his characters entitle him to the highest praise.

However, it is to be presumed, with all their success in comedy, that the Romans, in the tragic drama, fell far short of the Greeks, since none of their pieces in this way have reached us, except those of Seneca, although many were composed before his time by different authors. Of these, if we may judge from the remaining fragments, the style was nowise excellent; wanting the closeness and harmony of the Greeks.

But, were there not other and still greater deficiencies arising from the nature of tragedy, which no powers of art or language could supply?

In comedy the Romans might excel, as there the characters are taken from general life, with which all are acquainted; so that they had nothing to do but paint the manners as they saw them. In tragedy the characters were more particular, the action more important; and in order that the whole might make a deeper impression, some story venerable for its antiquity was generally pitched upon, in which all the principal actors were persons of royal or noble birth; and sometimes gods and demi-gods were taken into the scene.

How then could the Romans, whose history extended backward only a few hundred years, easily find a story, either for its antiquity, grandeur, or other tragical consequence, sufficiently adapted to this serious and most important part of the drama? They were therefore, obliged to have recourse to the Grecian fable, which amply supplied them with subject; but of which all the best and most interesting parts had been already preengaged by the finest Grecian writers.

With these it was in vain to contend; as, besides the superiority of their language and fable, their genius seemed naturally more elevated, versatile, and inventive; had more sensibility with more passion; a nicer discrimination of character; in fine, they possessed all those requisites peculiar to poetry in general, but more especially that kind of it exhibited on the stage.

To prove the justness of this remark, one has but to read a few pages in Sophocles, Euripides, or Aristophanes; all of whom, besides their superior excellence of style, far surpass the Roman authors in wit, humor, character, fable, passion, and sentiment.

One species of poetry, indeed, but of a different kind from the former, the Romans not only invented about this time, but afterwards carried to the greatest perfection. I mean Satire, the outlines of which being first sketched by Ennius, were thereafter more fully drawn by Ausilius; who, however rude in his versification and manner, shewed by his matter, to what useful purposes this branch of the poetic art might be extended. Accordingly, his successors, Horace, Juvenal, and Persius, the first with the gentler weapons of smiling satire, the other two with the zeal and eloquence of a noble indignation, attacked, ridiculed and stigmatized vice in all ranks, and wherever it was to be found.

Poetry has, in all ages, enjoyed a prescriptive right to serve in the cause of virtue; in satire she assumes her severest tone, and appears, as it were, in person, to brand the guilty, and vindicate the laws of morality. Dramatic and epic compositions instruct by example and indirectly: Satire carries on the work of reformation by a bold and open attack on whatsoever obstructs her course: she ranges over the wide extended fields of folly and vice; exposes and combats whatever is ludicrous in the one, or detestable in the other. In a word, mankind is her province; and her object the numberless foibles, caprices, and enormities of the human race.

### *Letter of Doct. Johnson to the Earl of Chesterfield.*

I have been lately informed by the proprietor of the World, that two papers in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor, which being very little accustomed to favors from the great—I know not well how to receive or in what terms to acknowledge.

When upon some slight encouragement I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered like the rest of mankind by the enchantment of your address and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*; that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms or was repulsed from your door, during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain and



have brought it at least to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached the ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early would have been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my works thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it if possible with less, for I have been long awakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with much exultation.

"My Lord,  
"Your Lordship's most humble,  
"Most obedient Servant,  
"SAM. JOHNSON."

#### *Of frequenting Places of Amusement.*

Be cautious in frequenting the theatre, and other public amusements. There is no dignity in shewing one's self continually; nor is it easy to maintain strict modesty in a round of dissipation. To frequent public places is to mistake one's interest. If you have beauty you will make it common; if you need graces to set yourself off, you should be still the more reserved; besides, a constant recourse to amusements lessens our relish for them. If all your life were to be spent in pleasures till either your taste for them were lost, or because nature forbids further enjoyment, the remnant of life would be found insipid or painful, for want of resources of employment. If, therefore, you would prolong your amusements, have recourse to them only as remissions from more rational pursuits. Engage in the cultivation of reason, and in mental interest. Neglect not that intercourse, and the absence of dissipation will leave no vacancy, no uneasiness, no regret. It is necessary that we cultivate reason, and regulate our desires; if these objects be neglected, existence has little to bestow. Innocence can preserve our peace of mind, but irregularity distracts.

#### *Dissipation leads to Ruin.*

I must strongly exhort you to be temperate in all your views and actions. We should have been more fortunate if our income had rendered computations less necessary; but as your's is narrow, it behoves us to be econo-

mits. Be discreet, then, in the article of expense; for if you do not adhere to moderation in this respect, you will soon have the mortification of seeing your affairs in disorder. If you once lay aside attention and economy, nothing can be answered for. Pompous living is the high road to ruin, and reduction of fortune is almost always followed by depravity of manners. Remember, that in order to be regular, it is not necessary to be sordid. Avarice is unprofitable and dishonorable. Adhere to good management only in order to avoid the injustice and shame attendant on irregularity. Let us retrench unnecessary expenses, for the sake of preferring such as decency, friendship, and charity require us to make. It is established good order, and not looking into trifling matters which turns out to great account. When Pliny sent back a bond for a considerable sum, which the father of his friend owed him, accompanied with a complete acquittance, he remarked, "Though my estate be small and I am subjected to heavy expenses, yet my frugality produces a fund which enables me to render services to my friends." Abridge therefore your fancies and diversions, that you may not be deprived of the gratifications of generous actions, which every person of a liberal mind ought to indulge in. Avoid vanity, and be wholly regardless of the wants it creates. It is commonly said, "We must necessarily be like others." This sentiment has great latitude, and leads to much evil. Have a nobler emulation, and be ambitious to excel in honor, probity, and integrity. Be rich in the endowments of mind, and in the practice of virtue. Poverty of soul, is a much worse state than poverty of circumstances.

#### *On the Knowledge of the human Character.*

IN order to please, the human characters should be understood. Men are much more affected by what is new than by that which is of value; and yet the attraction of novelty soon subsides; what fascinates for a moment, may by possession soon cloy, or displease. To supply this taste of novelty, we must have many resources, and various kinds of merit. We must not limit ourselves to agreeable accomplishments only, but captivate their minds by various graces and talents, and diversify the same object with all the pleasures of variety.

#### *History, Nature and dignity of MUSIC.*

AMONG that variety of sources, whence our benevolent Creator has indulged us, to derive rational and refined pleasures, there is not one which engages the soul more intimately, or seizes the affections more forcibly, than MUSIC.

Whoever attends to the mechanism of the human body, will find from the structure of the lungs and organs of speech, that the Almighty has there adjusted the most per-

fect musical instrument possible; and observation teacheth us, though the delicate subject is too infinitely minute for the finest eye of philosophy, that the ear is so framed as to answer the great design of communicating the modulations of the soul.

The pleasure designed for man, in this finished work of nature, must have been early suggested to him while yet untutored in the sciences. Was it the band of feathered songsters which serenaded the garden of bliss? Was it the soft voice of the mother of mankind, when led by the hand of infinite goodness, all glowing in the blushes of primeval innocence, that first taught Adam the effect of his refined accomplishment? Or did he hear the carol of morning stars, or the full chorus, of the sons of God on the birth-day of creation? However this may be, sure we are, that MUSIC was not only attended to, but carried to considerable perfection, before the deluge. For waving the argument which might be drawn from that high degree of luxury which we are taught to believe prevailed in the days of Noah; we are expressly told in the fourth of Genesis, that Jubal, the seventh from Adam "was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." This proves that the principles of music had been investigated; for the invention of a musical instrument, necessarily implies a knowledge of the scale.

The importance of music in the estimation of the only church, the Almighty acknowledged in ancient times, is fully proved by the liberal provision made for its professors under the legislation of Moses and subsequent leaders in the Jewish commonwealth.

Shall we trace this lovely divinity through the triumphant paeans of Deborah? The siend-killing pipe of the little shepherd of Bethlehem? The exulting welcome of the stripping hero, as he returned from the conquest of the giant of Gath? The solemn dirges over Saul and Jonathan? The coronation of the musician after God's own heart, to the gate of Solomon's temple; where on the solemn feast-days, the songs of degrees filled a whole realm with adoration and praise?

Again we see her in Babylon, tuning the harp, the sacbut, the psaltry, and dulcimer;—though with pain we recognize the idolatry of those solemn rights, and the horrid cruelty of pagan fanaticism, yet this ought not to lessen the dignity of Music;—for Oh! how cursed have mankind been by the perversion of the religion, even of the immaculate Jesus!

Heathen mythology is full of evidence of the great estimation in which music was held by the ancients. The Harp was the representation of Apollo, because harmony reigns in Heaven.

Orpheus and Amphion are famed by the classic poets to have carried music to such perfection, as to command, not only men, but brutes; and inanimate substances are made to follow the delightful enchantment; To complete the allegory—the walls of Thebes are fabled to have arisen spontaneous to such melodious strains.



# LITERARY TABLET.

See the famed Timotheus, handling the invincible Alexander ;—he who murdered his friend is made to weep over the wretchedness of his enemies ;—and love and tenderness, assisted by music take possession of a heart, the very den of tyranny and slaughter.

Notwithstanding the great attention paid to music by the ancients, we do not find that any of them were acquainted with the principles of concord and discord, till about 430 years before the Christian Era.—Pythagoras made the discovery, and endeavored to illustrate his subject, by a curious spiral, which has long since been laid aside for more simple methods. We now find this powerful engine of sensibility receiving a prodigious reinforcement.

Charming, indeed, are the delightful modulations of a *solo*, in the hand of a master ; but how much more sublime, is that solid column of excellence, which moves, majestic, thro' a full *chorus*, over the parian pavement of a well wrought thorough-bass.

About this time the sister arts, *poetry, painting, and architecture* began to make rapid advances in Greece ; monuments of which will endure with the last sand in the glass of time ! Not that there are remaining, any of their temples, columns or pictures, in a state comparable with their primitive perfection—their rules yet guide the hand of every artist, and to deviate is but to wander from beauty.—This is true only of the two last. Homer yet stands unrivalled on the list of poets.—Can we suppose that music was alone neglected in this region of taste ? Why then have we no evidence of her progress ? Give me leave to reply :—The elegant column arose, its pedestal was marble—its shaft marble—its capital marble, which required ages to impair : but music is too celestial in its nature to remain so long below ; it soon rises above mortality, and seeks its native heaven. The same must be said of ancient Rome, which was, at best, only the pupil of Greece, as Greece was of Egypt—yet we may assert from good authority, that in the glory of the Roman commonwealth, martial music was cultivated ; and in the decline of the Empire, when luxury was crumbling it to ruin, the more delicate strains were prostituted, to produce that pusillanimous disposition, which proved her destruction. The greater the blessing which is misimproved, the greater the consequent curse !

Now savage vandalism drives her horrid plowshare over the cultivated fields of Asia, and Europe, and involves every vestige of taste, in the same promiscuous destruction ! Ages of darkness succeed, and *superstition and fanaticism* prowl unchecked through the world. Nothing could be more inimical to mankind, than these two furies from the regions below. They erected the standard of ignorance, and wrote the holy name of religion on its ensign, in the blood of the innocent ! the eye of Astronomy was torn out. The hand of improvement cut off and cast away ! Nothing was heard of music, unless in her wayward flight, she lit upon the sunny side of an Alpine rock, to vibrate the shepherd's

tabour, or sooth the persecuted Waldensian with a song of resignation, as he walked to the fatal stake ; or in pity to the Scottish peasant, groaning under feudal tyranny, she lent her tender inspiration, as a transient draught of Lethe's stream, to suspend for a moment, a consciousness of his wretchedness.

Ought we not to pause, and drop a tear over the unhappy fate of poor Rizzio, whose fascinating strains, even at this distant period, are still whistled by the rustic swain, and warbled by the rosy milkmaid ?

This artist, in high favour with his royal mistress the unfortunate Mary, was soothing her corroding cares, with a plaintive song, when a jealous husband, with one vindictive thrust, laid him a lifeless corpse !—Pardon me—I'll dwell no longer in this moral midnight !—The measure of papal iniquity was full, and Heaven mercifully pitied its creature man, sunk such depths in wretchedness !

The morning dawned—Luther dared to burst the pontifical charm, and William Tell to break the feudal chain ! The day advanced—at last the sun broke out—while NEWTON was filling the world with light, LOCKE improving the understanding, music began to touch the organ in all its glorious improvements in Italy.

Neighboring nations caught the flame, and Germany gave birth to the great G. F. Handel, whose works will ever remain the monument of his amazing genius.—He broke thro' the shackles of rules, and soared aloft on his own unborrowed pinions. Whoever looks over his oratories, must feel a kind of solemn admiration, inspired by nothing short of original excellence. Providence, more than once, protected him from the sword of the invidious assassin, and preserved the man exactly calculated to found the basis of subsequent improvement. He seems, however, great as he was, to have never thought of that fine sentiment, which is the sole province of melody, but to have confined himself too much to harmony : he excelled most in the full chorus as may be seen in his *Messiah*, *Judas Macchabeus*, and *Saul* ; while in his *Alexander's feast* are found touches in martial music unequalled before or since.

The Italian Correlli succeeded him in the greatest musician on earth. He attended as much to melody, as Handel did to harmony ; and carried sentimental music to such perfection, that in his eighth *concerto*, which is purely instrumental, he has described the visit of the angels to the shepherds, at the nativity, almost as plain as words could express it.—The glorious news of salvation, is the most sublimely announced, and he has succeeded to astonishment in painting the whole choir of angels, filling the atmosphere with their celestial strains.

(To be continued.)

FOR THE LITERARY TABLET.

*Pallida mors aquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernus  
Regumque turres.* HORACE.

"With equal pace imperial fate  
Knocks at the palace and the cottage gate."

INTERESTING must it be to every rational being to consider attentively the instability of all terrestrial objects. There is nothing so permanent, which time does not impair, nothing so compact, in whose texture is not involved the principle of dissolution. Decaying pyramids, mouldering battlements and monumental ruins, corroborate the assertion. The wing of time is neither clipped nor short ; nor are the revolutions of nature ever impeded in their course. Generations follow each other in quick succession down the declivity of time ; and silently plunge into the unfathomable abyss of oblivion.—Where are the patriarchs and prophets, the oriental shepherds and husbandmen ? They are known only on the pages of sacred writ. Where are the numerous armies of the invincible Alexander, and the unfortunate Darius ? their bodies have gorged the ferocious wolves and vultures of the east, and their bones bleached the banks of the Tygris and Euphrates. Where are the haughty Tyrants and ambitious Demagogues of antiquity ? Their triumphant archers and colossal statues have fallen by the corroding power of time. Where are the bards and warriors of Fingal ? They repose in silence in the mystic vales of Caledonia, and not even "a grey stone" arises to perpetuate their remembrance.

Without distinction the arrow of death is levelled at the idiot and Philosopher, the beggar and Potentate. The moment, which closes their eyes, forever, seals their doom. Swept from the stage of human existence, their souls wing their way to immortal bliss, or endless misery. The ephemeral insect of creation man, alternately sports in the sun-beams of prosperity, or buffets the rude billows of adversity. The child of reason, his views extend beyond the confines of time, and enter the regions of eternity. Impressed with an idea of his own importance, he believes his soul will survive the dissolution of his mortal frame. But there are a few, who would disbelieve its immortality. Does reason—does philosophy teach them that a being, capable of an endless progression in virtue and knowledge, can be limited to this sublunary world—to a few years of existence ? Wild inconsistent fanatics ! They must have revelled only in the pleasures of sense, and never tasted sublime enjoyments of mental felicity. Never would they be injured should the flights of their souls be as circumscribed, as their groveling minds. But the more thinking part of mankind can never believe man the fortuitous offspring of chance, nor "death an eternal sleep." Reason, Philosophy, and religion discard the absurdity. They declare him the image of his maker, an heir of immortality. They announce an *hereafter*—a day of retribution, when he shall be summoned before the bar of our all-judging God ; when the sceptic can no longer doubt, nor the materialist prate about non-existence.

QUISPIAM.



## LITERARY TABLET.

### SELECTED POETRY.

#### TO ADVERSITY.

Daughter of Jove, relentless power,  
Thou tamer of the human breast,  
Whose iron scourge, and tort'ring hour,  
The bad affright, afflict the best!  
Bound in thy adamant chain,  
The proud are taught to taste of pain,  
And purple tyrants vainly groan  
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy fire to send on earth  
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,  
To thee he gave the heavenly birth,  
And bade to form her infant mind.  
Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore  
With patience many a year she bore:  
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,  
And from her own she learnt to melt at others' woe.

Scar'd at thy frown terrific fly  
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,  
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,  
And leave us leisure to be good.  
Light they disperse; and with them go  
The summer-friend, the flatt'ring foe;  
By vain Prosperity receiv'd,  
To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd.

Wisdom, in fable garb array'd,  
Immers'd in rapt'rous thought profound,  
And Melancholy, silent maid,  
With leaden eye, that loves the ground,  
Still on thy solemn steps attend;  
Warm Charity, the general friend,  
With Justice, to herself severe,  
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,  
Dread Goddess! lay thy chastening hand;  
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,  
Not circled with the vengeful band  
(As by the impious thou art seen),  
With thund'ring voice and threat'ning mein,  
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,  
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

Thy form benign, oh Goddess! wear,  
Thy milder influence impart,  
Thy philosophic train be there  
To soften, not to wound my heart.  
The gen'rous spark extinct revive,  
Teach me to love, and to forgive,  
Exact my own defects to scan,  
What others are, to feel; and know myself a man.

[Literary Miscellany.]

From the Port Folio.

#### THE MISANTHROPE.

#### A FRAGMENT.

Where wild Wautauga's angry waves  
Through wilder mountains roar,  
Where hungry wolves, from lurid caves,  
Their frightful howlings pour,

Where eagles fix their airy seats,  
Above the lonely stream,  
Where Panthers find secure retreats,  
And luckless ravens scream,

There will I dwell—with friendly bears,  
I'll fix my social den,  
And bid adieu to all the cares  
Of faithless, savage men!

If passing clouds with fury driven,  
Break on the mountain side,  
And all the hail and rain in heav'n,  
Come down to swell the tide,

If howling blasts sweep through the caves,  
And mountain torrents roar,  
And old Wautauga's foaming waves  
Beat on the solid shore;

If lightnings flash, and thunders roll  
And awful meteors play,  
Secure from man my tranquil soul  
Will bless the peaceful day.

Though central fires from sulph'rous beds,  
With direful shocks explode,  
Secure from man no minor dreads  
Shall visit my abode!

No seeming friend's insidious wiles  
Can e'er assail me there;  
Nor will I dread the pois'nous smiles  
Of the seductive fair!

Nor bloated Wealth, with shallow brain,  
And silly pompous stride,  
Shall vex my wounded soul again,  
Or wake my dormant pride.

Cætera desunt.

#### THE MAID'S SOLILOQUY.

#### A PARODY.

The maid alone, with Milton in her hand, opens to  
that celebrated passage,—

— Hail wedded love! mysterious law! &c.  
Our Maker bids—increase;—who bids abstain,  
But our destroyer, foe to God and man!

It must be so! Milton, thou reasonest well,—  
Else why this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after something unpossess?  
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror  
Of dying unespoused? why shrinks the soul  
Back on itself, and startles at virginity?  
'Tis reason, faithful reason, stirs within us;  
'Tis nature's self that points out an alliance,  
And intimates a husband to the sex.  
Marriage!—thou pleasing, and yet—anxious  
thought!

Through what variety of hopes and fears,  
Through what new scenes and changes must  
we pass!

Th' unchanging state in prospect lies before me;  
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon  
it.

Here will I hold. If nature prompts the wish  
(And that she does is plain from all her works),  
Our duty and our interest bid, indulge it,  
For the great end of nature's laws, is bliss:  
But yet—in wedlock woman must—obey!—  
I'm weary of these doubts—the priest shall end  
them.

Nor rashly do I venture loss and gain;  
Bondage and pleasure meet my thoughts at  
once:

I wed—my liberty is gone—for ever;  
But happiness from time itself secur'd!  
Love first shall recompence my loss of freedom;  
And, when my charms shall fade away, my eyes  
Themselves grow dim, my stature bend with  
years,

Then virtuous friendship shall succeed to love;  
Then, pleas'd, I'll scorn infirmity and death,  
Renew'd immortal, in a final race.

#### RURAL HAPPINESS.

How happy is the rural clown,  
Who, far remov'd from noise of town,  
Contemns the glory of a crown,  
And in his safe retreat,  
Is pleas'd with his low degree,  
Is rich in decent poverty,  
From strife, from care, from business free,  
At once baith good and great!

Nae drums disturb his morning sleep,  
He fears nae danger on the deep,  
Nor noisy law, nor courts ne'er heap  
Vexation on his mind;  
No trumpets rouse him to the war,  
No hopes can bribe, no threats can dare;  
From state intrigues he holds afar,  
And liveth unconfin'd.

Like those in golden ages born,  
He labours gently to adorn  
His small paternal fields of corn,  
And on their product feeds;  
Each season of the wheeling year,  
Industrious he improves with care,  
And still some ripen'd fruits appear,  
So well his toil succeeds.

Now by a silver stream he lies,  
But angles not with baits and flies;  
Then next the sylvan scene he tries,  
His spirits to regale;  
Now from the rock or height he views  
His fleecy flock, or teeming cows;  
Then tunes his reed, or tries his muse,  
That waits his honest call.

Amidst his harmless easy joys,  
No care his peace of mind destroys,  
Nor does he pass his time in toys  
Beneath his just regard;  
He's fond to feel the zephyr's breeze,  
The scenes of faithful rural loves,  
And warbling birds on blooming groves,  
Afford a wish'd delight;  
But O how pleasant is that life!  
Blest with a chaste and virtuous wife,  
And children prattling, void of strife,  
Around his fire at night!

#### RETIREMENT.

How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,  
A youth of labour, with an age of ease;  
Who quits a world where strong temptation try,  
And since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!  
For him no wretches born to work or weep,  
Explore the mine, or tempt the dang'rous deep;  
No surly porter stands in guilty state,  
To spurn imploring Famine from the gate;  
But on he moves to meet his latter end,  
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;  
Bends to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,  
While resignation gently slopes the way;  
And all his prospects, brightening to the last,  
His Heaven commences ere the world be past!

#### A CHARACTER.

#### —A maid

Who knows not courts, yet courts does far out-  
shine,  
In every starry beauty of the mind;  
One, who arrayed in native loveliness, despises  
art;  
And has a soul too great to stoop to pride,  
With the mean ways by which it aims at gran-  
deur.